Tariff revision of TRAI

2622. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have reconstituted the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India just a few years after it was formed;

(b) the tariffs set by its original Committee are to be revised upwards; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for this ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) With a view to strenghthening the regulatory framework in the telecom sector, Government promulgated the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Ordinance, 2000 on 24th January, 2000, which has since been replaced by an Act of Parliament. Under the amendments brought about, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has also been reconstituted and shall now consist of a Chairperson and not more than two whole-time Members and not more than two part-time Members to be appointed by the Central Government.

(b) and (c) Under section 11(2) of the TRAI Act, 1997, TRAI has been empowered to notify from time to time, the rates at which the telecomminication services within India and outside India shall be provided including the rates at which messages shall be transmitted to any country outside India. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has informed that the Telecommunication Tariff Order 1999 (TTO 99) of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India had envisaged rebalancing of tariffs, to be achieved in three phases. The order also provided for a review before the introduction of the second phase of rebalancing of tariffs, to be achieved in three phases. The order also provided for a review before the introduction of the second phasae of rebalancing. The first phase commenced w.e.f. 1st April, 1999 and was to be followed by the second phase w.e.f. 1st April, 2000. TRAI has further informed that pending further studies it has decided to defer the implementation of the second phase by four months.

Reconstitution of TRAI

2623. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to reconstitute the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI);